



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

JANUARY, 2022

Week-1

1-7 Jan, 2022

★★ Useful for ★★

**CSE, ESE, PSUs, State Services Exams,
SSC and Banking Exams**

1st JANUARY 2022

S-400 Defence Missile System

- The first unit of S-400 Triumf has been deployed in Punjab for protection against any strike from Pakistan and China.
- The system has been deployed at one of the five IAF bases in the state, which borders Pakistan.

Key Points:

- The S-400 system is an upgrade of the S-300 surface-to-air missile system. It was bought from Russia.
- The S-400 is known as Russia's most advanced long-range surface-to-air missile defence system.
- It is capable of simultaneously tracking numerous incoming objects including aircraft, missiles and UAVs in a radius of a few hundred kilometres and launching appropriate missiles to neutralise them.
- It is also capable of protecting its air defence bubble against rockets, missiles, cruise missiles and even aircraft.

Green Hydrogen

- The government is planning to blend 15 percent green hydrogen with Piped natural gas (PNG) for domestic, commercial and industrial consumption.
- The move is in line with India's ambitious target of reducing greenhouse emissions and becoming carbon neutral by 2070.
- This initiative will be part of the government's National Hydrogen Energy Mission aimed at generating hydrogen from green power sources.
- The government will bring green hydrogen under renewable purchase obligation (RPO). It means that bulk buyers such as Discoms and captive users have to buy a certain proportion of renewable energy (RE) out of their total power requirement.

About Hydrogen

- Hydrogen is the lightest element. It is the simplest and smallest element in the periodic table. No matter

how it is produced, it ends up with the same carbon-free molecule.

- Hydrogen is colourless, odourless, tasteless, non-toxic, and highly combustible.
- Hydrogen is the most abundant chemical substance in the universe, constituting roughly 75% of all normal matter.
- Hydrogen fuel is a zero-emission fuel burned with oxygen. It can be used in fuel cells or internal combustion engines. It is also used as a fuel for spacecraft propulsion.

NOTE:

Green hydrogen is defined as hydrogen produced by splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen using renewable electricity.

Current Account Deficit

- **Context:** India's current account slipped into a deficit of \$9.6 billion or 1.3 per cent of GDP in the September quarter.
- It is the shortfall between the money flowing in on exports, and the money flowing out on imports.

About Current Account:

- The current account measures the flow of goods, services, and investments into and out of the country. It represents a country's foreign transactions and, like the capital account, is a component of a country's Balance of Payments (BOP).
- There is a deficit in Current Account if the value of the goods and services imported exceeds the value of those exported.
- A nation's current account maintains a record of the country's transactions with other nations, that includes net income, including interest and dividends, and transfers, like foreign aid. It comprises of following components:
 - Trade of goods
 - Services
 - Net earnings on overseas investments and net transfer of payments over a period of time, such as remittances.

- It is measured as a percentage of GDP. The formulae for calculating CAD is:
 - $\text{Current Account} = \text{Trade gap} + \text{Net current transfers} + \text{Net income abroad}$
 - $\text{Trade gap} = \text{Exports} - \text{Imports}$

Sahitya Akademi Awards

- **Context:** Recently, the Sahitya Akademi announced its awards for 2021 for literary works in 20 languages, including novels in Assamese and English by Anuradha Sarma Pujari and Namita Gokhale respectively.
- Sahitya Akademi Awards was established in 1954, is a literary honour. It is conferred by Sahitya Akademi which is India's National Academy of Letters.
- The Sahitya Akademi Award prizes the most outstanding books of literary merit published in any of the major Indian languages recognised by the Akademi.

About Sahitya Akademi:

- It is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Culture, encouraging the preservation and promotion of languages, especially the unrecognized and tribal languages.
- The Sahitya Akademi Library is one of the largest multi-lingual libraries in India, with a rich collection of books on literature and allied subjects.
- **It publishes two bi-monthly literary journals:** Indian Literature in English and Samkaleen Bharatiya Sahitya in Hindi.

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Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance (FRDI) Bill

- The Government recently introduced the Finance Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill in the Parliament. It aims to strengthen the financial sector and reduce risk.

Key points about Bill:

- The bill empowers the Central government to establish a Resolution Corporation with a head office at Mumbai. It will have 11 members including a Chairperson, three whole time members, two independent members and five ex-officio members (nominated by RBI, SEBI, IRDAI, PFRDAI and one officer from Ministry of Finance).
- Notwithstanding anything in any other law for the time being in force, while exercising its powers, the Corporation shall have the same powers as are vested in a civil court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, while trying a suit.
- **The Resolution Corporation has the following functions:**
 - (a) Provide deposit insurance to banking institutions.
 - (b) Specify the criteria for the classification of a specified service provider into one of the categories of risk to viability.
 - (c) Act as an administrator for the specified service provider which has been classified in the category of critical risk to viability.
 - (d) Exercise powers in relation to certain termination rights in respect of specified service providers.
 - (e) Resolve a specified service provider which has been classified in the category of critical risk to viability.
 - (f) Act as a liquidator for a specified service provider against which an order of liquidation has been made.
 - (g) Any other powers and functions as may be prescribed.
- The financial firms will be classified into five categories on the basis of financial risk to ensure that there is a clear mechanism for assessment, monitoring, and dealing with imminent failures before they occur. These categories in increasing order are : Low Moderate Material Imminent Critical

Draft National Air Sports Policy (NASP 2022)

- The government released a draft national policy for air sports in the country that will require entities providing these services and their equipment to be registered, as well as be liable for penalties.

Key Highlights:

- The policy proposes a two-tier governance structure for air sports in the country, which will include an apex governing body called the Air Sports Federation of India (ASFI) and associations for each air sport.
- The NASP 2022 covers sports like aerobatics, aeromodelling, amateur-built and experimental aircraft, ballooning, drones, gliding, hang gliding and paragliding; microlighting and paramotoring; skydiving and vintage aircraft.
- **Air Sports Federation of India (ASFI):** The ASFI will be an autonomous body under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and will represent India at the Lausanne-headquartered Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) and other global platforms related to air sports.
- Each air sports association will lay down its safety standards for equipment, infrastructure, personnel and training, and specify the disciplinary actions to be taken in case of non-compliance.
- All persons and entities providing air sports services will be required to register as members of the respective air sports associations.
- It is proposed that popular air sports attractions in the country such as Bir Billing in Himachal Pradesh, Gangtok in Sikkim, Hadapsar in Maharashtra and Vagamon in Kerala can be declared as a “control zone” for air sports in order to ensure the safety of other manned aircraft.

RCEP: World's largest trade deal

- Trade barriers between most countries in the Asia Pacific will be lowered significantly from January 1

as the world's largest free trading bloc opens for business.

- The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a trade deal between the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand.
- RCEP will cover about 30% of global gross domestic product (GDP), worth \$26.2 trillion (23.17 trillion), and nearly a third of the world's population, some 2.2 billion people.

About RCEP:

- The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a trade deal between the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand.
- RCEP will cover about 30 percent of global gross domestic product (GDP), worth \$26.2 trillion, and nearly a third of the world's population, some 2.2 billion people.
- While China already has a number of bilateral trade agreements, this is the first time it has signed up to a regional multilateral trade pact.
- The RCEP is expected to eliminate a range of tariffs on imports within 20 years.
- It also includes provisions on intellectual property, telecommunications, financial services, e-commerce and professional services.

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24th Financial Stability Report

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the 24th issue of the Financial Stability Report (FSR).

Key Highlights:

- Global economic recovery has been losing momentum in the second half of 2021 in the face of resurfacing COVID-19 infections.

- The corporate sector is gaining strength and bank credit growth is improving.
- The capital to risk-weighted assets ratio (CRAR) of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) rose to a new peak of 16.6 percent and their provisioning coverage ratio (PCR) stood at 68.1 per cent in September 2021.
- Macro stress tests for credit risk indicate that the gross non-performing asset (GNPA) ratio of SCBs may increase from 6.9 per cent in September 2021 to 8.1 per cent by September 2022 under the baseline scenario and to 9.5 per cent under a severe stress scenario.

About Financial Stability Report (FSR):

- FSR is published by RBI bi-annually on behalf of the Financial Stability and Development Council, an umbrella group of regulators which gives an overview of the health of India's financial system.
- It reflects the collective assessment of the Sub-Committee of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) on risks to financial stability and the resilience of the financial system in the context of contemporaneous issues relating to development and regulation of the financial sector.
- The RBI looks at the state of both the global as well as domestic economy.

Rani Velu Nachiyar

- **Context:** The Prime Minister of India remembered the brave Rani Velu Nachiyar on her birth anniversary.

About Rani Velu Nachiyar

- Born on January 3, 1730, in Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu, India,
- She was the first queen to fight against the British colonial power in India.
- She is known by Tamils as Veeramangai.
- She was the princess of Ramanathapuram and the only child of Raja Chellamuthu vijayaragunatha Sethupathy and Rani Sakandhimuthal of the Ramnad kingdom.

- In collaboration with Hyder Ali and Gopala Nayaker, she waged a war against the British and emerged victoriously

Hate Speech

- **Context:** Recently, the Vice-President of India spoke out against hate speech, saying it goes against the country's culture, Constitution and ethos.

About Hate Speech:

- There is no international legal definition of hate speech, and the characterization of what is 'hateful' is controversial and disputed.
- The term hate speech is understood as any kind of communication in speech, writing or behaviour, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factor.

Provisions against Hate Speech

- **Section 153A IPC** penalises 'promotion of enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony'.
- **Section 298 IPC** penalises 'uttering, words, etc., with deliberate intent to wound the religious feelings of any person'.
- **Section 505 IPC** penalises publication or circulation of any statement, rumour or report causing public mischief and enmity, hatred or ill-will between classes.

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National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT) 3.0

- Recently, the Union Education Minister launched the National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT) 3.0.

Key Points:

- The Ministry of Education had announced NEAT as a Public-Private partnership model between the Government (through its implementing agency AICTE) and the Education Technology companies across India.
- It is an initiative to provide the use of best-developed technological solutions in the education sector to enhance the employability of the youth on a single platform for learners' convenience.
- These solutions use artificial intelligence for a personalised and customised learning experience for better learning outcomes and skill development in niche areas.
- It aims to bring the best technological products in education pedagogy on a single platform for the convenience of learners.

GitHub: Open Source Software Platform

- Recently, the Github, an open-source software repository service was used to create and share an offensively named app that sexually harassed women in India.

About GitHub:

- GitHub is the world's largest open-source developer community platform where users upload their projects and code for others to view, edit, and tweak.
- Under this platform, any developer can upload whatever software code or app code or software idea they have on the platform and have others collaborate with them to help improve it, find errors, and fix problems.
- The platform uses the software Git, which was created in 2005 by Linus Trovalds, the developer of the open-source operating system Linux, to track changes in a set of files and for coordination in software development.
- GitHub has longstanding policies against content and conduct involving harassment, discrimination, and inciting violence.

NOTE:

Open source software (OSS) is software that is distributed with its source code, making it available for use, modification, and distribution with its original rights. Source code is the part of software that most computer users don't ever see.

5th JANUARY 2022

Western Disturbances

- **Context:** The India Meteorological Department has forecast widespread showers across Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, northern Rajasthan and western Uttar Pradesh because of rainfall due to Western disturbances.

About Western Disturbance (WD):

- A western disturbance is an extratropical storm originating in the Mediterranean region that brings sudden winter rain to the northern parts of the Indian subcontinent. It is an extra-tropical storm that originates in the Mediterranean region.
- In the term "extra-tropical storm", the storm refers to low pressure. "Extra-tropical" means outside the tropics (as WD originates outside the tropical region).
- Western Disturbances are at their peak in January and February and are considered important for the development of rabi crops in the Northern subcontinent
- Western Disturbances are the cause of the most winter and pre-monsoon season rainfall across North-West India. This phenomenon is usually associated with cloudy sky, higher night temperatures and unusual rain. It is estimated that India gets close to 5-10% of its total annual rainfall from western disturbances.

China's Artificial Sun EAST

- Recently, China's "artificial sun" ran for more than 17 minutes at five times hotter than the real sun.

- Researchers managed to run the “artificial sun” at 70 million degrees for as long as 1,056 seconds, or 17 minutes, 36 seconds.

About EAST:

- EAST is a nuclear fusion reactor facility, designed and developed by China. The facility is called an “artificial sun” because it mimics the nuclear fusion reaction that powers the real sun – which uses hydrogen and deuterium gases as fuel.
- The EAST has been used since 2006 by scientists from all around the world to conduct fusion-related experiments.
- The EAST project is part of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) facility, which will become the world’s largest nuclear fusion reactor when it becomes operational in 2035.
- It aims to replicate the process of nuclear fusion, which is the same reaction that powers the sun.
- The EAST harnesses extremely high temperatures to boil hydrogen isotopes into a plasma, fusing them together and releasing energy.

NOTE:

Nuclear Fusion is the process whereby lighter atoms combine to form heavier atoms accompanied by the release of energy. This process powers the Sun and other stars, whereby they generate heat and light.

Solid-State Batteries

- The QuantumScape Corp, backed by Volkswagen AG is working on developing “Solid-State Batteries” with an aim to commercialise it by 2025.

Key Points:

- These batteries use solid electrodes and a solid electrolyte, instead of the liquid or polymer gel electrolytes found in lithium-ion or lithium polymer batteries.
- Solid-state batteries can provide solutions for many problems of liquid Li-ion batteries, such as

flammability, limited voltage, unstable solid-electrolyte interphase formation, poor cycling performance and strength.

- In the charging & discharging cycle, ions transfer to and fro between the anode (negative electrode generally made of graphite) and cathode (positive electrode made of lithium).

Advantages:

- Higher cell energy density (by eliminating the carbon anode)
- Lower charge time (by eliminating the need to have lithium diffuse into the carbon particles in conventional lithium-ion cells)
- Ability to undertake more charging cycles and longer life.
- Improved safety and Lower cost.
- Increase capacity of EV batteries

6th JANUARY 2022

Multi-Agency Center (MAC)

- **Context:** The Union government has asked the States to share more intelligence inputs through the Multi-Agency Center (MAC).
- The Centre wants the States to share more intelligence inputs through the MAC.
- The continued threats of terrorism and global terror groups, terror financing, narco-terrorism, organised crime-terror nexus, illicit use of cyberspace, movement of foreign terrorist fighters are being noticed.

About Multi-Agency Center (MAC)

- MAC was formed in December 2001 following the Kargil intrusion and the subsequent overhaul of the Indian national security apparatus suggested by the Kargil Review Committee report and GoM report.
- Accordingly, the Intelligence Bureau (IB) was authorized to create a Multi-Agency Center (MAC) in New Delhi.

- Now functioning 24/7 as the nodal body for sharing intelligence inputs, MAC coordinates with representatives from numerous agencies, different ministries, both central and state.
- As noted in a 2016 parliamentary report the major contributors of intelligence inputs to the MAC were the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) and the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW).
- In 1831, he founded the first indigenous religious congregation for men, now known as the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI).
- In 1846, with the permission of Swathi Thirunal, the maharajah of Travancore, Saint Chavara founded a printing press in Mannanam and published educational materials and books to promote social harmony.

UJALA Programme

- **Context:** The Ministry of Power successfully completed seven years of distributing and selling LED lights under its flagship UJALA programme.

About UJALA:

- Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) is a zero-subsidy scheme launched in 2015. It is also known as the LED-based Domestic Efficient Lighting Programme (DELP) and is the world's largest domestic lighting project.
- It Aims to promote the efficient usage of energy for all i.e., its consumption, savings and lighting.
- Eligibility: Every domestic household having a metered connection can get LED bulbs.

Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara

- **Context:** The 150th death anniversary of Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara was commemorated recently.

Key Points:

- Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara was born in 1805 at Kainakary, Kerala, India.
- He was a social reformer, an educationist, a social entrepreneur, and a prolific poet.
- He triggered a renaissance in Kerala in the 19th century.
- In 1846, Saint Chavara established a Sanskrit school in Mannanam in Kerala, that enabled ordinary people to study the sacred Hindu literature in Sanskrit.

- The first religious congregation for women (CMC-CTC) he founded in 1866.
- He founded a House of Charity in 1869 in Kainakari, his native village, for the aged, the abandoned and the sick.
- He spent the last seven years of his life at Koonammavu, Kerala, where he died on 3 January 1871 and was buried in Saint Philomena's Church, Koonammavu.

Mukhyamantri Krishak Uparjan Sahayta Yojna

- The Madhya Pradesh government gave its approval to Mukhyamantri Krishak Uparjan Sahayta Yojna.

Key points:

- It is aimed at providing budgetary allocation to enable government agencies such as Food and Civil Supplies Corporation and Markfed to tide over operational losses incurred during the procurement of grains from farmers.
- This scheme had been brought to ensure agencies such as MP Markfed out of the vicious cycle of paying heavy interest on loans taken to ensure procurement and timely payment to farmers.
- The move was undertaken to ensure farmers get a fair market price.
- However, the cost of increased procurement was borne by the state government through loans.

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Smart Cities and Academia Towards Action and Research (SAAR)

- Recently, the Union Government launched Smart Cities and Academia Towards Action and Research (SAAR) under the Smart Cities Mission. SAAR will document the projects implemented by Smart Cities Mission. It is a part of Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav celebrations.

Key Points:

- SAAR is implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- The institutes will document the planning and implementation of smart cities mission. This will help the students learn urban development processes practically.
- The project will document outcomes of the smart city mission and its impact on lives of the urban citizens. Students from the premier institutes will visit the selected smart cities to learn about the workflow of the mission.
- This includes data analysis, field investigation, peer review of the first draft, research workshops. The participating students will then submit a report along with suggestions. These documents will act as the first reference for future research. SAAR is to create a repository of urban projects.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (PM-JAY)

- Context:** The Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) provided a cushion to only 14.25 per cent of people hospitalized for the COVID-19, between April 2020 and June 2021.

About PM-JAY

- The scheme was launched in September 2018 and recommended by the National Health Policy 2017, to achieve the vision of Universal Health Coverage (UHC).
- It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme having a central sector component under Ayushman Bharat Mission

- PM-JAY was earlier known as the National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS) before being rechristened.
- It subsumed the then-existing Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) which had been launched in 2008.
- It is the world's largest health insurance/ assurance scheme fully financed by the government and the cost of implementation is shared between the Central and State Governments.
- It provides a cover of Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization across public and private empanelled hospitals in India.
- It covers up to 3 days of pre-hospitalization and 15 days of post-hospitalization expenses such as diagnostics and medicines.
- There is no restriction on the family size, age or gender.
- Eligibility:** The households included are based on the deprivation and occupational criteria of Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011 (SECC 2011) for rural and urban areas respectively.

Nirbhaya Kadhi Campaign

- Context:** Ganjam district of Odisha is the first in the state which has declared itself a child marriage free district.
- The Ganjam administration has also made Aadhaar card mandatory to produce for any marriages to take place.

About Nirbhaya Kadhi:

- The Nirbhaya Kadhi programme was started in Ganjam. The campaign was started with the objective of preventing adolescent girls from dropping out of school, and counseling them.
- Under the programme, all the heads of educational institutes were directed to inform administration if girls aged 12 to 18 years remained absent from school for five days.
- Around one lakh teenagers have undergone counselling under the programme, in the past two years.
- Administration had also announced Rs 5,000 for those informing about any child marriage. This amount has now been increased to Rs 50,000.